

## Star Wars

### Wizard's RPG Stories

source : <http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=starwars/newsarchive>  
upload : 10.IV.2006

Tilnes Falling

Scenario Supplement for Caaried Away

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Former Living Force Plot Director and Campaign Designer Morrie Mullins presents the latest in our monthly series of supplements to the campaign's newest scenarios. In "Tilnes Falling," an internal memo leaked from a Tilnes mining company hints at dark secrets and brewing trouble. This supplement ties into the March Living Force scenario, Caaried Away, the first part of the "Metatheran Caution" trilogy.

The Verga Mer Mining Company - - VMMC - - has experienced any number of problems with its holdings in the Cularin system. While they survived accidentally snubbing a Hutt and managed to stay in business even without the assistance of Nirama and his smuggling consortium, their mining operations on Tilnes have never been among the most secure. The strange electromagnetic pulses that wash over Tilnes with disturbing frequency have cost VMMC thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of credits, and the discovery of not one but two secret bases beneath the surface of Tilnes did little to make the miners, investors, or managers of VMMC more comfortable.

Somehow, VMMC has remained in business. The mines of Tilnes have long been fertile, providing one of the most consistent sources of high-grade crystals used as power foci in a number of popular blasters. With weapon production up as a result of the Clone Wars, the mines of Tilnes are at peak production - - no mean feat, since they're now a decades-old establishment in galactic trade.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle VMMC had to overcome was its re-entry to the marketplace following the strange events over Almas, which kept it from being a major player in the original equipping of the armies of either the Separatists or the Loyalists. Still, the canny Verga Nus and Mer Stodiz managed to pull things together, make the necessary deals, and sign all the contracts to put VMMC back into the crystal business.

All is not well, though. Recently, internal memos have begun to circulate outside VMMC offices, indicating that something may not be right. The information remains very hush-hush, and for now, travels only by word of mouth. Some might wonder what else those mouths carry...

Memo Date: [3 weeks ago] From: HB7 To: All Area Managers

Colleagues,

It has been noticed by me and my people that there are some things not right in the mines. The south polar regions of the mines are having trouble again. It's not those dumb worms this time. In fact, we don't see much of them right now, and we don't know why. Some of my workers have said it's too quiet down there, and when I go down, it seems really quiet to me, too. I don't know what's going on, but ever since the piggies and their blaster-happy neighbors got found by the nice kids who pulled VMMC's tail out of the fire back with those crashes and the big blackout a while ago, things have been weird.

I know that company policy says that we never knew nothing about those piggies or the Thaere people, and that's fine. We never did. None of my people, for sure. It's hard enough doing what we do without having to worry about running into some patrol of half-size, snout-face, lying freaks who smile so big you think they're gonna eat their own heads. (And I know the company policy says we're not supposed to talk ill about the piggies, but that's for public consumption, and I've got enough years here that I'm not about to apologize for speaking plain when I'm just talking to my peers.) Don't even get me started on how worried I was about my workers going down into the tunnels, knowing those half-baked freaks from Thaere might be wandering around, waiting to shoot someone. I don't need to remind you how freaked out our people were when the two head honchos from the Jedi Academy showed up because of all the problems, and our own security people weren't doing much more than sitting around and looking cute. I still want to see the report from security on why we didn't know what was going on down there, but I guess that's just something I should file a different memo for. I don't know. Sometimes, I just wonder.

I was there when we saw the piggies off and back into their ships, so I guess they're orbiting somewhere, trying to keep away from all the other locals who want to put holes in them. They've got to be some kind of warped, to stay around here with the way some people want to kill them. It's like they jumped hyperspace and their brains didn't come along. I don't know about the rest of you, but I'd really like to see a report on what they were doing down in that secret base of theirs, too. They blasted it on their way out so that no one else would end up using it, and what's down there is just rubble and debris and junk. But we're miners. We can send folks in to check that out and clear it. It may be getting in the way of us doing our jobs. I don't want that, you don't want that, and we all know it. I hear the response already. "We are not going to invest resources... must maintain market share... based on productivity reports..." Caaried Away Summary Mining activity on Tilnes has suffered a number of setbacks, not the least of which was the discovery some time ago of a pair of hidden bases -- one Caarite base and one Thaereian installation. Now, even with those bases "closed," problems continue.

With all due respect, I say that if management don't care what the piggies and the Thaereians were doing, they can invest some resources in blowing their productivity reports out their market share. It makes no sense to me, or anyone else I talk to, to think that they spent all that time down there and didn't make any kind of extraction from our mines.

Now here's the other thing that's bothering me. Some of our operations are getting way too close to the Smile. This place is nothing but bad, and I don't care if we've got survey teams that are saying there are huge deposits of high-grade crystals down there. We've got no way to get them out. None.

Zilch. Zero. We get too close to the Smile and all our machines start shutting down, and the people we've sent that way on foot aren't coming back looking too good. I have a couple down really sick right now with some bizarre mine-fever. I know that VMMC's been on Tilnes a long time, and maybe we think we know better than those old legends about Kaernor, but the thing you learn in any place that you've been long enough is that old legends become old legends because they've got a kernel of truth. If we go too close to the Smile, if we start digging in a place where we shouldn't be digging, we're risking more than just profits and market shares and resources. We're risking lives. That's not good for me, and I hope it's not good for you.

The fact that the piggies and the Thaereians were so close to the Smile really sits badly for me. I mean, it makes a lot of sense that they'd use that area as a cover, but it also tells me that they didn't care, and when you flaunt not caring around things like that, they come back to bite you. I don't know that those Thaereians care about anything except themselves, and that's their business. I still say that the team that disappeared a month before the Thaereians were discovered probably wandered on a patrol, but I've read the "official enquiry" reports just like everyone else has and know that Thaere denied everything. I don't know what anyone expected them to say. They shot at the kids who helped us out, chased them and tried to kill them.

About the only decent things to come out of Thaere are the things that came out of Thaere, the people who defected. I hear some of them are all right, and one of them's doing good work on a militia. (Exactly who got the kickbacks for putting them in our backyard, by the way? Not that I care, at this point, since at least we know they're here and what they're up to. Besides, they spend more time repairing droids than anything else.)

I just think there are too many secrets right now. Management isn't talking to us. We're not involved in the decisions. Not that we ever have been, really, but still - there's a lot going on in Cularin. I'm thinking that we're part of this system, and just because we're a business doesn't mean we should sit around and do nothing when everyone else is doing something. It also doesn't mean that the something we do ought to be something everyone sees, but it ought to be something. If that makes sense.

We need to think about our place in this system. Better or worse, we're here, and better or worse, we've got contributions we can make.